

OUR HISTORY

North Harbour Special Olympics was formed in the mid 80's, centered originally around students at Wairau Valley Special School.

North Harbour hosted the first Special Olympics Regional Games held at Takapuna Grammar School in 1987.

North Harbour's team at the 1987 inaugural Regional Games. 20 years on, many of those 'originals' are still North Harbour Special Olympians.



NOW

We currently have just over 150 athletes ranging in age from teens to mid 60s.

They receive weekly coaching and training, and participate in local, regional and national competition in Athletics, Basketball, Golf, Indoor Bowls, Soccer, Swimming and Tenpin bowling.

We have an active winter sports programme (skiing and snowboarding), and hold five very popular discos every year.

Special Olympics is keen, wherever possible, to help athletes develop sufficiently to participate in mainstream sports groups and events.

We are enthusiastic about schools involvement, enabling younger athletes to become North Harbour Special Olympians, and to enjoy activities and achievements, competition and comradeship well into their adult lives.

Special Olympics & Paralympics

People often confuse the two organisations.

- Paralympics' focus is on competition for elite athletes with a physical disability
- Special Olympics' focus is on sports training and competition for people with a disability at all ability levels.

THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS FAMILY

Around the World

The Special Olympics organisation is an international charitable trust which enables over two million intellectually disabled people of all ability levels in over 160 countries to actively participate in a range of sports.

Special Olympics Inc was founded in 1962 and the first Special Olympics Games held in Chicago in 1968.



In New Zealand

Special Olympics New Zealand (SONZ) began in 1983, founded by Grant Quinn who coached four young men with Down's Syndrome at the Hutt Valley swimming club and took this group to the 1983 World Summer Games.

Currently in NZ over 3,800 athletes participate in the non-government funded programme on a regular basis, with weekly training and local, regional, national and international competition.

Vision: 'Through Sport, make a positive difference to the lives of those with intellectual disabilities and to the community'.

Special Olympics North Harbour

is a unique club on the Shore which:

- Provides sport coaching, training and competition to people with an intellectual disability
- Encompasses a *range of sports* to serve a wide range of ability and fitness levels
- Provides social interaction and opportunities, team spirit, self esteem, personal growth – and *enjoyment*
- Athletes' ages range from early teens to sixty plus



We emphasise:

- Participation for people of *all* ability levels
- Achieving personal best performances
- Regular coaching, training and competition for all.

Special Olympics North Harbour

Ph 479 6573 email northharbour@specialolympics.org.nz

Proudly supported by



North Harbour Athletes and coaches at the 2005 National Games. 40 of our 150 athletes competed

We provide sports coaching, training and competition for people with an intellectual disability.

Personal Growth : Fitness : Confidence
FUN : Team Spirit : Challenge
Reward : Achievement : Inclusion
Life Style : TRAVEL : CAN – DO
Involvement : Satisfaction : Competition
Friends : ENJOYMENT : Skills : HEALTH
: Opportunities : SELF ESTEEM :
Participation : Belonging

OUR ATHLETES

All our Special Olympians are *characters* who quickly win affection and respect. All have an intellectual disability. Some have multiple disabilities, including vision or hearing impairment, or physical disability.

The ability range of our athletes is significant.

At the *high ability* end, some are very capable and successful athletes. They may appear 'normal', but are in fact limited in their ability to process complex instruction or thoughts, have limited reading/writing skills, and need support to

manage their everyday lives.

At the *high needs* end, we have a number of athletes who have no or very limited language, limited physical ability and require one-on-one support.

And everything in-between. We therefore need very special volunteer coaches and managers.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

We couldn't function without the support of our wonderful volunteers, who have a variety of skills, a positive attitude and enthusiasm for the progress and enjoyment our athletes display.

Because of the variety of tasks needed to run our programmes, volunteer time varies from:

- an hour or two most weeks for coaches and managers, who also accompany teams to competitive events; to
- a few hours a couple of times a year (officiating at competitive events, fundraising etc)..

Most of our sports would benefit from more volunteers.

OUR SPORTS

Athletics: (summer)
Fridays, 6 - 7.30 pm
Westlake Girls Gym.

Our Track & Field athletes train and compete in running and walking events, softball throw, shot put, running and standing long jumps.



Basketball: (winter)
Saturdays, 9 – 10am,
Westlake Girls Gym.

Our two teams are enjoying success in competition with other Special Olympics groups.

We host annual competitive Ribbon Days and will enter a team in the 2009 National Games for the first time. The photo - with the Breakers after playing a curtain raiser.

Golf: (all year)
Saturdays 2 – 3pm
(not last of month),
Waitemata Golf Club,
Devonport.

Some sessions are held at the Barry's Point driving range.

North Harbour hosts the Special Olympics golf (north) programme that also includes golfers from Auckland and Waitakere.



Indoor Bowls: (winter)
Wednesdays, 6.15 – 7.15pm,
Albany Hall

This sport is enjoyed by our athletes over a wide age-range, and offers interest, socialisation and a satisfying Wednesday night out!

It is particularly suitable for older or less physically able or active people.



Soccer: (winter)
Sundays,
2.30 – 4pm,
Hato Petera College

Although soccer is a popular sport for Special Olympics groups throughout the rest of New Zealand (and the world!) the North Harbour squad is currently the only one in the Upper North Island. We have made a big thrust to find competitive opportunities for our players.

Two 5 a side teams compete in Special Olympics events in Hawkes Bay and Manawatu and we expect to have a team at the 2009 National Games.



Swimming: (all year)
Sundays, 6.15 – 7.30pm.
Takapuna Aquatic Centre
Our swimmers range from pretty darn good (tumble turns, racing dives and all four strokes) to 'developmental'.

We host a Ribbon Day every September, with over 100 swimmers from Special Olympics groups from the Upper North Island, and we attend Ribbon days, Regionals and National Games.

Tenpin: (all year)
Saturdays, 9.30am-12
Tenpin Takapuna.

This is our biggest group with over 46 regular players. Training is weekly,

three games a session.

Skiing/Snowboarding:
(SnowPlanet) and Upper North Island
(Whakapapa). Dates/times on application.



COMPETITION:

We attend, in all our sports:

- Annual Upper North Island Ribbon Days
- Regionals Games
- Four-yearly NZ National Games, (Summer & Winter)
- Four-yearly World Games (Summer & Winter)